

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS
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SUBJ: MBFR: BILATERAL DISCUSSION WITH SOVIET DEP REP SHUSTOV

1. AT INVITATION OF SOVIET DEP REP, US DEP REP MET WITH
FORMER FOR DISCUSSION OF NEW EASTERN PROPOSALS. SOVIET DEP REP
HAD OFFERED TO EXPLAIN THE PROPOSALS FURTHER.

2. US DEP REP ASKED WHY SOVIETS HAD COME TO THE FIGURE OF
TWO DIVISIONS PLUS IN SPECIFYING THEIR PROPOSED REDUCTIONS
RATHER THAN SOME OTHER FIGURE. HE NOTED THAT TARASOV IN
BRIEFING US REPS ON EVENING OF JUNE 6 ON CONTENT OF NEW EASTERN
INITIATIVE, HAD SAID THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD WITHDRAW THREE
DIVISIONS.

3. SHUSTOV REPLIED THAT THE COMPONENT ELEMENTS WHICH
WOULD MAKE UP THE EQUIVALENT OF A THIRD DIVISION WOULD BE
"SERIOUS" UNITS AND NOT MERELY A GRAB-BAG. ONE REASON WHY THE
EAST HAD NOT OFFERED A THIRD DIVISION OUTRIGHT WAS THAT SOME
IN THE EAST CONSIDERED THAT IF THE EAST OFFERED THREE DIVISIONS,
THIS WOULD, IN THE NEGOTIATING CONTEXT, BE TOO MUCH.

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4. US DEP REP ASKED SHUSTOV WHETHER THE LIMITS THE EAST
HAD PROPOSED ON UNITS WERE LIMITS ON ALL UNITS OF A CERTAIN
SIZE OR UNITS OF CERTAIN FUNCTIONAL TYPES.

5. SHUSTOV REPLIED THAT THE EAST HAD IN MIND LIMITING
BRIGADES FOR THE US AND DIVISIONS FOR THE SOVIETS AND NOT UNITS
ON A FUNCTIONAL BASIS AND DID NOT NOW HAVE IN MIND LIMITING

SMALLER UNITS.

6. US DEP REP SAID HE SAW A SERIOUS IMBALANCE IN THE PRESENT EASTERN OFFER FOR EASTERN PHASE I REDUCTIONS COMPARED TO WHAT THE WEST WAS SUPPOSED TO REDUCE IN PHASE I. THE WESTERN NUCLEAR OFFER OF DECEMBER 1975 HAD BEEN INTENDED AS APPROPRIATE COMPENSATION FOR A FIRST PHASE REDUCTION CONSISTING OF 68,000 MEN, A SOVIET TANK ARMY AND 1700 TANKS, PLUS THE NUMERICALLY LARGER MANPOWER REDUCTIONS THE EAST WOULD TAKE IN THE SECOND STAGE. NOW, THE EAST WAS OFFERING ONLY 30,000 SOVIET SOLDIERS PLUS 1,000 TANKS AND AN EQUAL NUMBER OF MEN IN THE TWO PHASES OVERALL. THERE WAS A SERIOUS IMBALANCE HERE.

7. SHUSTOV SAID THE SOVIETS CONSIDERED THEIR PROPOSAL FOR SOVIET FIRST PHASE WITHDRAWALS TO BE A VERY SERIOUS ONE. ONE THOUSAND TANKS WAS A VERY LARGE NUMBER. BESIDES, THIS WAS A NEGOTIATION. DID THE WEST EXPECT THE SOVIETS MERELY TO ACCEPT OUTRIGHT THE FIGURE OF 1700 TANKS PROPOSED BY THE WEST? MOREOVER, AS FAR AS US WITHDRAWALS WERE CONSIDERED, THE US DOUBTLESS WAS GOING TO WITHDRAW OBSOLETE WARHEADS AND SAVE MONEY IN THE PROCESS. THE US SHOULD NOTE THAT THE SOVIETS WERE NOT IN THEIR PROPOSALS ATTEMPTING TO SPECIFY THE TYPES OF WARHEADS THE US SHOULD WITHDRAW. ANOTHER FACTOR WAS THAT THE WEST COULD READILY VERIFY SOVIET TANK WITHDRAWALS, WHEREAS THE US NUCLEAR WITHDRAWALS COULD NOT BE VERIFIED AND THE SOVIET UNION WOULD BE DEPENDENT ON US GOOD FAITH. BEYOND THIS, WARSAW
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TREATY REPRESENTATIVES HAD REPEATEDLY POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS NO RECOGNIZED SCALE OF EQUIVALENCE BETWEEN NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS AND TANKS. IN THE TECHNICAL SENSE, THIS WAS A SERIOUS SHORTCOMING, BECAUSE WHEN THE SOVIET DELEGATION WAS IN MOSCOW, IT COULD NOT ANSWER QUESTIONS AS TO WHAT THIS EQUIVALENCE MIGHT BE OR ABOUT THE DEGREE TO WHICH WESTERN PROPOSALS WERE EQUITABLE. ALL THE SOVIET DELEGATION HAD RECEIVED FROM THE WEST IN ANSWER TO THEIR QUESTIONS ON THIS TOPIC WERE ASSERTIONS THAT THE WESTERN PROPOSAL OF DECEMBER 1975 WAS IMPORTANT.

8. US DEP REP SAID THE TREATMENT OF ARMAMENTS REDUCTION IN PHASE II IN THE NEW EASTERN PROPOSAL WAS DISAPPOINTING AND EVEN FELL SHORT OF THE SOVIETS' OWN BILATERAL SUGGESTIONS IN THE SPRING OF 1977 THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD BE PREPARED NOT TO DEMAND COMMITMENTS TO REDUCE ARMAMENTS FROM WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS OTHER THAN THE US AND WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH NON-CIRCUMVENTION. IN A LONG RESPONSE, SHUSTOV STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF ARMS REDUCTIONS. HE THEN WENT ON TO SAY THAT IF THE WEST WANTED TO MAKE A COUNTER-PROPOSAL BASED ON NON-REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS BY NON-US WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS AND NON-CIRCUMVENTION, HE WOULD ASSUME ON A PERSONAL BASIS THAT IT WOULD BE CONSIDERED.

9. US DEP REP ASKED FOR BACKGROUND ON THE EASTERN PROPOSAL OF A FREEZE ON CIVILIANS AND WHETHER THE SOVIETS HAD CONSIDERED ALL THE POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS WHICH NEGOTIATING SUCH A PROVISION WOULD ENTAIL.

10. SHUSTOV DID NOT MAKE A STRONG DEFENSE OF THIS PROVISION, BUT MERELY STATED THAT SUBSTITUTION OF CIVILIANS FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL WOULD BE A METHOD OF COVERT CIRCUMVENTION OF AN AGREEMENT.

11. US DEP REP SAID US REPS HAD, AT THE END OF THE LAST ROUND, STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF EASTERN MOVE ON DATA IN CONNECTION WITH THE EASTERN RESPONSE. THEY HAD NOT EXPECTED TO
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FIND IT AS A FORMAL PART OF THE RESPONSE. WHAT DID THE EAST INTEND IN THIS FIELD?

12. SHUSTOV REPLIED THAT EAST NOW FORMALLY RECOGNIZED THERE COULD BE NO REDUCTION AGREEMENT WITHOUT AGREEMENT ON DATA. HE DID NOT SEE ANY SPECIFIC MOVE WHICH THE SOVIETS OR WARSAW TREATY PARTICIPANTS COULD MAKE IN THIS FIELD. IT WAS THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE THAT THE WEST HAD COUNTED SOME CATEGORY WHICH THE EAST HAD NOT COUNTED. THE QUESTION WAS HOW TO GO ABOUT IDENTIFYING IT. US DEP REP SAID IT WAS UP TO THE SOVIETS TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE ON THIS. THE EAST KNEW THAT THE WEST HAD COUNTED ALL WARSAW PACT ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE AREA INCLUDING, OF COURSE, THOSE CARRYING OUT THE SUPPORT FUNCTIONS TO WHICH THE WEST HAD ONCE AGAIN REFERRED IN RECENT INFORMAL SESSIONS. THE SOVIETS SHOULD REVIEW EASTERN FIGURES TO SEE IF EACH OF THESE CATEGORIES WERE INCLUDED IN FULL IN THEIR COUNT. RESOR

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